



Prepared by:

Lisa Finnegan

Deputy Chief Executive
Officer

Signature:

Lisa Finnegan

Date:

12th November 2024

Approved by:

Tony Lacey

Chief Executive Officer

Tony Lacey

12th November 2024

Jane Owens

Chair of Trustees

Jane Owens

12th November 2024

Contents

Statement of intent	Page 3
1. Aims of the policy.....	Page 3
2. Roles and responsibilities	Page 3
3. Recruitment and selection process	Page 4
4. References	Page 6
5. Interviews.....	Page 6
6. Offer Of Employment And Pre-Employment Checks	Page 8
7. Candidates who lived outside of the UK	Page 8
8. Agency and third party staff	Page 9
9. Trainee and student teachers	Page 9
10. Staff transferring between schools in our Trust	Page 10
11. Contractors	Page 10
12. Adults who supervise children on work experience	Page 11
13. Governors	Page 11
14. Right to work checks	Page 11
15. After the pre-employment checks	Page 12
16. Recruitment of ex-offenders	Page 13
17. Single Central Record (SCR)	Page 13
18. Induction	Page 14
19. Renewal of checks	Page 14
20. Appendix 1: New starter form	Page 15

Statement of Intent

Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all pupils in its care, and the safe recruitment of staff is the first step to achieving this. Our academy expects all staff and other adults working with us to share this commitment. The aims of the safer recruitment and selection policy are to establish a robust and effective culture of safeguarding, attract the most suitable, high calibre candidates, and to help deter, reject or identify people who might abuse pupils or are otherwise unsuited to working with them.

1. The aims of this policy are as follows:

- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation, statutory requirements and guidance
- To ensure that our academies and the Trust meet its commitment to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people by establishing a safe culture and carrying out all necessary checks related to pre-employment and continued suitability
- To ensure that the best possible staff are recruited on the basis of their merits, abilities and suitability
- To ensure that all job applicants are considered equally and consistently, and no job applicant is treated unfairly on any grounds

We have a principle of open competition in our approach to recruitment and will seek to recruit the best applicant for the job. The recruitment and selection process will ensure the identification of the person best suited to the job based on the applicant's abilities, qualification, experience and merit, as measured against the job description and person specification. We aim to operate these procedures consistently and thoroughly while obtaining, collating, analysing and evaluating information from and about applicants applying for job vacancies.

2. Roles and Responsibilities

As an Academy Trust, Oak Trees MAT is the employer and is responsible overall for appointments within the Trust and its schools. The Headteacher and the Trust are responsible for determining the staffing complement of their school and appointing staff to work there. The CEO is responsible for the appointment of Headteachers, the Executive Team and the Head Office Team. The Board of Trustees are responsible for the appointment of the CEO. All recruitment activity is supported by the Trust's HR provider, providing guidance as appropriate.

It is the responsibility of the Trustees to ensure that we have effective policies and procedures in place for the recruitment of all adults working with children, in accordance with DfE guidance and legal requirements, and to monitor our compliance with them. It is the responsibility of the Trust, Headteacher, Senior Leaders and other designated staff involved in recruitment to ensure that we operate safe recruitment procedures, and make sure all appropriate checks are carried out on all recruited staff, to monitor contractors' and agencies' compliance with this document, and to promote welfare of children and young people at every stage of the procedure.

The Trust will ensure that at least one member of the appointment panel has successfully completed Safer Recruitment Training. This member will be part of the whole recruitment process.

3. Recruitment and Selection Procedure

3.1. Diversity and discrimination

The importance of diversity will be taken into account at each stage of the recruitment process. All processes and procedures will be regularly reviewed to ensure any unconscious bias is removed and to ensure talent is not being prevented from entering the organisation. Everyone taking part in recruitment activities such as shortlisting and interviewing will be aware of relevant legislation, including the Equality Act 2010, and the importance of eliminating discrimination.

3.2. Advertising:

To ensure equality of opportunity, the Trust will advertise all vacant posts to encourage as wide a field of applicant as possible; normally this entails an external advertisement.

All advertisements for all posts will clearly stipulate the stance adopted by the Trust by the inclusion of the following Safeguarding Statement:

“Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment”.

A job description is a key document in the recruitment process, and will be published alongside the job advert. It will clearly and accurately set out the duties and responsibilities of the job role. All job descriptions will be written in line with terms and conditions within the Burgundy book and the School Teachers Pay and Conditions document (for teachers) and the Green book (for support staff)

The person specification is of equal importance and informs the selection decision. It details the qualification, skills, experience, abilities and expertise that are required to do the job. The person specification will include a specific reference to safeguarding and the suitability to work with children. It will also be published alongside the advert and job description.

All documentation relating to applicants will be treated confidentially in accordance with the UK GDPR.

3.3. Application Forms

The Trust will only accept a completed application form; a CV on its own will not be accepted. We will use a standard application process, with all applicants required to complete an

application form containing questions about their education, full employment history and their suitability for the role. Incomplete application forms will not be shortlisted.

The application form will include the applicant's declaration regarding convictions, and will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. It is unlawful for us to employ anyone who is barred from working with children. It is a criminal offence for any person who is barred from working with children to apply for a position. All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected, summary dismissal (if the applicant has already been selected), and referral to the police and/or the DBS.

3.4. Shortlisting:

At least two people should carry out the shortlisting exercise, one of which must be safer recruitment trained, and one who should also be a member of the interview panel.

All candidates will be assessed equally without exception against the same criteria, drawn from the person specification. It is recommended to use a standard scoring matrix for each candidate in order to record scores and evidence how they have been reached. Each member of the shortlisting panel will record their own scores for each applicant, and then come together to share and compare scores, and agree a shortlist of successful candidates for interview.

Applications will be closely scrutinised to ensure that they are fully and properly completed, the information provided is consistent, does not contain any discrepancies, and any gaps in employment are identified. Any anomalies, discrepancies or gaps identified by the scrutiny will be noted so that they can be explored and clarified with the candidate prior to, or during, interview.

Where a candidate has indicated under declarations of interest, that they know or are related to an existing employee, Trustee, Governor or Member of Oak Trees Multi Academy Trust, it is the responsibility of the recruitment panel to ensure that this person is not involved in the appointment, or the decision behind the appointment.

After shortlisting has been carried out, shortlisted candidates will be sent a self-declaration form. This will ask questions regarding convictions and working with children, and will make it clear that the post is exempt from the provisions of the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. All applicants will be made aware that providing false information is an offence and could result in the application being rejected or summary dismissal if the applicant has been selected and possible referral to the police and other professional regulatory bodies.

3.5. Invitation to interview

Once a shortlist has been confirmed, the candidates to be invited for interviews will be contacted and suitable interview times will be decided. The recruitment panel will ensure that

all shortlisted candidates receive information about the interview arrangements, how they will be conducted, the areas that will be explored and what documents they should bring.

4. References:

Subsequent to shortlisting, we will seek references prior to interviewing shortlisted candidates, including internal candidates, which allows any concerns raised to be explored further with the referee and taken up with the candidate at interview.

Any offer of employment will be subject to the receipt of a minimum of two references which are considered satisfactory, none of which can be from a relative. One of the references must be from the applicant's current or most recent employer, or the most recent employer where the applicant was working with children, and references should cover a minimum of the last 2 years. If an individual is new to employment, or there has been a significant break in employment, references can be accepted from a professional who knows the individual.

References will always be sought and obtained directly from the referee. The purpose of a reference is to gain objective and factual information to support appointment decisions.

We use a standard reference template with all short-listed candidates. All referees will be asked whether they believe the applicant is suitable for the job for which they have applied and whether the referee has any reason to believe that the applicant is unsuitable to work with children.

Open references will not be accepted if they are addressed 'To whom it may concern', neither will references with no date or no obvious organisation authorisation; these may not be genuine, or may have valuable information missing if they are out of date or not specifically responding to questions in the reference pro forma.

Any discrepancies or anomalies will be followed up directly with the referee, and direct contact by phone may be undertaken with referees to verify the reference. If received electronically, the email to which the completed reference was attached will be retained, in order to evidence the identity of the sender and the date on which it was received.

Where necessary, previous employers who have not been named as referees may be contacted in order to clarify any such anomalies or discrepancies. Detailed written records will be kept of such exchanges.

5. Interviews:

There will always be a face-to-face interview (which may include the use of video calling) with each candidate and may include a range of other activities and tasks designed to assess the applicant's ability to meet the requirements detailed in the job description and the person specification. A minimum of two staff will see each applicant; these should include those involved

in short listing and should remain consistent for each candidate where possible. At least one member of the selection panel must have been trained in safer recruitment.

In addition to assessing and evaluating the applicant's suitability for the particular post, the interview and other selection tools will also explore the candidate's attitude towards children and young people, and their ability to support the academy's responsibilities for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children.

If documents submitted via the application process were submitted electronically, the candidate will be asked to sign their application form and any other verified documents to confirm their accuracy.

Upon completion of each stage of the selection process, each member of the panel will make their own notes throughout the interview process, and independently score each question or activity on a standard scoring matrix. Panel members will then come together, share and compare scores, and discuss their feedback in order to agree the final appointment. It is usual for a candidate who scores the highest in their interview to be selected for appointment; **however, the candidate who scores the highest in the various selection tools may not always be the ideal candidate for the job.** Care will be taken to consider and take account of all the available information about the candidates when making an appointment and, where appropriate, take account of whether the candidate has demonstrated the necessary skills and experience, whether their salary expectations are aligned to that of the post, and whether they will fit with the organisational culture.

Final decisions will always be recorded in writing and will be made objectively and without prejudice.

All copies of notes relating to the short-listing and interview decisions for successful and unsuccessful applicants/candidates will be retained in line with the Information and Record Retention policy.

Candidates will always be required:

- to explain satisfactorily any gaps in employment;
- to explain satisfactorily any anomalies or discrepancies in the information available to the interviewers; and
- to demonstrate their capacity to safeguard and protect the welfare of children and young people.

Any information in regard to past disciplinary action or allegations, cautions or convictions will be discussed and considered in the circumstance of the individual case during the interview process.

All applicants who are invited to an interview will be required to bring evidence of their identity, address and qualifications. Qualifications required are the ones specified in the essential

criteria on the person specification. Original documents will only be accepted and photocopies will be taken.

6. Offer Of Employment And Pre-Employment Checks:

All appointments will be conditional on satisfactory completion of the necessary pre-appointment checks. These checks seek to identify whether there is anything that would make the candidate an unsuitable appointment for working with children or as a teacher.

When appointing new staff, the school will:

- Verify the candidate's identity, e.g. checking the name and birth date on a birth certificate and verifying any name changes.
- Obtain an enhanced DBS check via the candidate and, for candidates engaging in regulated activity, barred list information.
- Obtain a separate children's barred list check if the individual will start work in regulated activity with children before the DBS certificate is available.
- Verify a candidate's mental and physical fitness to carry out their role.
- Verify the person's right to work in the UK.
- Obtain a social media check
- Make further checks as appropriate on any individual who has lived or worked outside the UK.
- Verify professional qualifications, as appropriate.
- Ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that individuals employed to work in Reception classes, or in wraparound care for children up to the age of 8, are not disqualified from working in these settings under the 2018 Childcare Disqualification Regulations.
- For those in management, trustee or governor roles, conduct a section 128 check, this will be recorded on the single central record.
- for all teaching staff checks will be made by the school Teaching Regulation Agency.

A firm offer of appointment will only be provided when we are in receipt of all checks of employment are completed.

The Trust's Safeguarding DSL will oversee and maintain a constant vigilance with all matters relating to the SCR, and ensure we are fully compliant at all times.

7. Candidates who have lived outside the UK

[The Teaching Regulation Agency no longer maintains a list of EEA teachers with sanctions. Schools must continue to carry out safer recruitment checks on all candidates and must make any further checks they think relevant.]

For candidates who have lived outside the UK, all mandatory checks outlined in this policy will be carried out, along with additional checks where necessary, including an enhanced DBS certificate with barred list information for those engaging in regulated activity, even if they have never been to the UK before.

The school will make any further checks that it deems appropriate so that any relevant events occurring outside the UK can be considered, e.g. obtaining proof of past teaching conduct for any candidate for a teaching position from the professional regulating authority in the country in which they worked, where available.

If a candidate is unable to provide the correct documentation, they cannot submit a DBS check. This is because the right to work in the UK cannot be established.

Following the UK's exit from the EU, schools and colleges should apply the same approach for any individuals who have lived or worked outside the UK regardless of whether or not it was in an EEA country or the rest of the world.

8. Agency and Third-Party Staff

In the case of any employee working at the school who is sourced from an agency or third-party organisation, the school will obtain written notification from the organisation confirming that they have carried out the same checks as the school would otherwise perform on any individual who will be working at the school, or who will be providing education on the school's behalf, including through online delivery.

Confirmation will also be obtained that the individual who presents for work is the same person on whom all checks have been completed. A copy of photographic identification will generally be kept where appropriate.

The school will obtain a copy of the enhanced DBS certificate from the agency or third-party organisation where it has been obtained before the person is due to commence work and has disclosed any matter or information. This will be recorded on the single central record.

9. Trainee and student teachers

The school will ensure that enhanced DBS certificates and barred list checks are obtained on all salaried candidates for initial teacher training who are in regulated activity.

Where trainee teachers are fee-funded, it is the responsibility of the initial teacher training provider to carry out the necessary checks. The school will obtain written confirmation from the agency that the checks have been carried out. This will be recorded on the single central record.

10. Staff Transferring between schools in our Trust

All members of staff are employees of the Trust, and may transfer to another school within the Trust as a result of redeployment, secondment or due to personal choice.

In the case of redeployment or secondment, we will request a letter of confirmation from the previous academy stating the date and outcome of all safer recruitment checks, and confirmation of any concerns relating to the employee's conduct and behaviour. The individual remains the employee of the Trust, so a new enhanced DBS is not required. In the event that the employee moves from a role not in regulated activity to a role that is in regulated activity, a Children's Barred List check will be sought.

In the case of an employee moving to a new role following successful appointment via a recruitment process, we will request a letter of confirmation from the previous academy stating the date and outcome of all safer recruitment checks, and confirmation of any concerns relating to the employee's conduct and behaviour. In addition, new references specific to the new role will be completed, alongside any other checks required by the new role that were not previously required, i.e. a Section 128 check for a teacher moving to a leadership position. As above, the individual remains the employee of the Trust, so a new enhanced DBS is not required, unless the DBS was not issued in the name of Oak Trees MAT.

In the event that the employee moves from a role not in regulated activity to a role that is in regulated activity, a Children's Barred List check will be sought. In the event of any concerns being shared at any point throughout the transfer process, we may choose to apply for additional checks to those stated above in order to verify information that has been shared, and to seek assurances about the employee's continued suitability to work with children.

The employee's SCR record will be transferred to the new school.

11. Contractors

The school will ensure that any contractor, or any employee of the contractor, has been subject to the appropriate level of DBS check. Contractors engaging in regulated activity will require an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information). For all other contractors who are not engaging in regulated activity, but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children, an enhanced DBS check (not including barred list information) will be required. Under no circumstances will a contractor in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity.

The school will set out its safeguarding requirements in the contract between the contractor's organisation and the school.

If a contractor is self-employed, the school will consider obtaining the DBS check, as self-employed people are not able to make an application directly to the DBS on their own account. The school will always check the identity of contractors and their staff on arrival.

12. Adults who supervise children on work experience

If the school is organising work experience placements, it will ensure that the placement provider has policies and procedures in place to protect children from harm. More information related to checks on work experience providers is outlined in the school's Work Experience Policy.

13. Governors

The local governing committee must must request an enhanced DBS certificate with a barred list check as part of the appointment process for governors.

Governors, Trustees and members will be subject to a section 128 check.

Newly appointed chairs of trustees will be subject to a suitability check, which includes:

- An identity check.
- Confirmation of the right to work in the UK.
- An enhanced DBS check.
- Where required, additional information if the individual has lived outside the UK for a period of 12 months or longer.

14. Right to work checks

The school will obtain evidence that all candidates for a position have the right to work in the UK by either conducting a manual document-based check, or by using the government's [online portal](#). This will be done before a candidate is offered a position.

When conducting a manual, document-based check, the school will ensure that the documents received from candidates are acceptable in line with government guidance, and from the appropriate list: [List A](#) for candidates with a permanent right to work in the UK, or [List B](#) for candidates with a temporary right to work in the UK.

The school will obtain proof of candidates' immigration status in the UK.

The school will contact the Home Office in the event that a statutory excuse must be established in the following circumstances:

- The candidate provides a document confirming receipt of an application to EUSS on or before 30 June 2021

- The candidate provides a non-digital certificate of application confirming receipt of an application to the EUSS on or after 1 July 2021
- The school has checked a digital certificate of application and has been directed to the Home Office's Employer Checking Service
- The candidate provides an Application Registration Card stating the holder is permitted to undertake the work in question
- The school is satisfied it has not been provided with any acceptable documents because the candidate has an outstanding application with the Home Office made before their previous permission expired, or has an appeal or review pending against the Home Office's decision and cannot provide evidence of their right to work as a result
- The school considers that it has not been provided with any acceptable documents, but the person presents other information indicating they are a long-term resident of the UK, i.e. having arrived before 1988.

The school will not make assumptions about a person's right to work in the UK, or their immigration status, on the basis of their race, ethnicity, nationality, length of residence in the UK or background. All candidates, including British citizens, will have their right to work in the UK checked.

Where a candidate's right to work is time-limited, the school will conduct a follow-up check in advance of its expiry.

The school may use a certified digital identity service provider (IDSP) to conduct right to work checks on candidates.

15. Identification checking process

When checking the validity of identifying documents, the school will ensure that this is done in the presence of the holder, e.g. in person or via a live video link. In both cases, the school will be in physical possession of the original documents. The school will only accept valid, current and original documentation in its physical form. The school will not accept photocopies or documentation.

The school will request documents with photographic identity, such as a passport, and compare this against the candidate's likeness. The school will not accept documents that are not in the candidate's current name as recorded on the application form.

The school will ensure that all letters and statements provided by the candidate are recent e.g. within a three-month period.

In line with the UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018, the school will only retain copies of DBS certificates where there is a valid reason for doing so, and only for as long as is needed to consider the information provided – this will not be for longer than six months.

When information is destroyed, the school may keep a record of the fact that vetting was carried out, the result of this vetting, and the recruitment decision taken.

16. After the pre-appointment checks

Once the pre-employment checks have been completed, the recruitment panel will:

- Agree a start date with the candidate.
- Set up a personnel file with contractual paperwork, including the completed application form, copies of identification, references, proof of qualifications, pre-employment medical report, social media check report.
- Add the required details of the checks carried out to the school's SCR.

17. Single central record (SCR)

The Trust maintains the SCR for all the schools within the Trust, each school will maintain and regularly update their own SCR. Please refer to the Trust's Single Central Record (SCR) Policy.

All new employees will be added to the record, which will include:

- All staff (including supply staff) who work at the school.
- All others who work in regular contact with children in the school or Trust, including volunteers, contractors and supply staff.

The bullet points below set out the minimum information that must be recorded in respect of staff members (including teacher trainees on salaried routes). The record will indicate whether the following checks have been carried out or certificates obtained, and the date on which each check was completed or certificate obtained:

Please note: for documents being viewed by the school, the date recorded on the SCR should be the date the document was seen, rather than the date it was issued.

- An identity check
- A barred list check
- An enhanced DBS check
- A prohibition from teaching check
- Further checks on people living or working outside the UK, including checks for European Economic Area (EEA) teacher sanctions and restrictions
- A check of professional qualifications
- A check to establish the person's right to work in the UK
- For those in management, trustee or governor roles, a section 128 check

For supply staff, the school will include whether written confirmation has been received that the employment business supplying the member of supply staff has carried out the relevant checks

and obtained the appropriate certificates, and the date that confirmation was received and whether any enhanced DBS check certificate has been provided in respect of the member of staff.

If checks are carried out on volunteers, this will be recorded in the SCR.

The Trust will ensure that all schools only have access to their own SCR but will have access to the central team SCR so that they can easily access the information for the Trust central team, Trustees and contractors that work across all schools within the Trust.

The details of individuals will be removed from the SCR once their employment with the school ends.

18. Induction:

All new employees will follow an induction programme upon start of employment which will share and clearly identify our policies and procedures, including those related to safeguarding, Health and Safety, staff conduct and pupil behaviour, as well as relevant extracts of KCSIE, dependent on their role.

During induction, we will make clear our expectations with regards to how staff will carry out their roles and responsibilities. Key messages will be regularly reinforced and revisited throughout the probation period, and successful completion of probation will only be agreed if the employee has been assessed to be suitable to continue to work with children.

Following induction, we will continue to deliver regular training and updates related to safeguarding. This will take place annually, in line with statutory requirements. Training will support us in establishing and maintaining a robust and effective culture of safeguarding in our academy, so that staff are encouraged and empowered to discuss any issues that may affect the safeguarding of children.

19. Renewal of checks

All employees are expected to immediately disclose anything that could affect their continued suitability to work with children. In line with this expectation, staff will be required to complete an annual self-declaration or childcare disqualification form (dependent on role) to support us in making an assessment of each individual's continued suitability.

The school will only carry out new checks on existing staff when:

- An individual working at the school or college moves from a post that was not regulated activity into work which is considered to be regulated activity.
- There has been a break in service of 12 weeks or more.
- There are concerns about an individual's suitability to work with children.

Appendix 1

New Starter Recruitment Checklist



Employee Name	
Job Title	

Recruitment checks	Yes/No
Application form – signed (not digital)	
Copy of contract	
Copy of firm offer letter	
Reference 1 -	
Reference 2 -	
Identity confirmed – Give details of documents seen: 1. 2. 3.	
Criminal disclosure form completed and signed (not digital)	
Right to work check completed?	
Previously worked/lived outside the UK check completed?	
Medical check completed?	
Any actions following medical report?	
MAT DBS check completed – Please note DBS number here:	
Barred list check completed? (if appropriate)	
Social media check completed? (findings discussed and reported to Trust where necessary)	
Qualification certificates obtained?	
QTS check completed via Teaching Regulation Agency (for all staff who hold a QTS)	
Prohibition check completed? (for any teaching and support staff carrying out teaching work)	
Childcare disqualifications check completed? (if working with under 5's or in wrap around with under 8's)	
128 check completed (for leadership roles only)	
SCR record completed	
Induction completed	
Set up on Arbor	
Request logins for email, computers etc	